

# Route 67 News



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*Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.*

## PROGRESS EDITION

### Route 67 Is Halfway There

The Route 67 corridor in Butler, Wayne and Madison Counties has reached an important milestone: contracts for half of all the projects have been awarded. Sections A, E and B have been awarded. Bids for Section C will go before the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission in March and the final section in May.

As of this writing, it has been 1,018 days since the citizens of Poplar Bluff approved a sales tax to help fund the Route 67 improvements, making them a reality. In those 1,000 days, much work has been accomplished. Long days have been put in by numerous departments and agencies. Partnerships strengthened with each step of the process toward progress.

“It’s almost become cliché to talk about teams,” says District Engineer Mark Shelton. “We have teams for every aspect of our lives. But when I think about the work that has occurred thus far in this project and what still lies ahead ... I couldn’t be prouder of the team that is delivering it, and I don’t think any other could have done a better job.”

That team started with Poplar Bluff’s citizens and the Highway 67 Corporation. Their initiative to partner with MoDOT and the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission is the foundation, the very reason, why work is happening on the corridor today. They are a prime example of how a community’s passion can literally move mountains.

Internally, MoDOT charged project managers Tim Richmond, Bill Robison and Andy Meyer as well as Resident Engineers Steve Bubanovich and Matt Malone with delivering a \$180 million quality project on time and under budget. A mammoth task that they have vigorously pursued.

Four engineering teams led by Jeff Wachter, Jason Williams, David Blalock and David

Wyman were responsible for designing and delivering plans for the entire 50-mile corridor. Their designers gave extra hours and weekends to meet an aggressive schedule. What ordinarily took place in years happened in mere months because of their dedication to the project.

led by Sherry Glastetter acquired that property in record time. With 310 tracts on a portion of the Route 67 corridor, her team was able to successfully negotiate and settle with all but 11 of the property owners to keep the project going.

Let’s take a look at exactly what has been accomplished:

- Secured a signed Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision from Fredericktown to Arkansas (a requirement from the federal government)
- Drilled 2,750 holes for soil testing
- Moved 220 out of 483 power poles
- Relocated 11.42 miles out of 27.41 miles of telephone lines
- Designed movement of 11.1 million cubic yards of dirt and rock
- Designed 30 bridges and 350 culverts
- Awarded more than \$81 million in construction contracts
- Black River Bridge complete
- Union Pacific Bridge complete
- Wappapello Bridge--75 percent complete
- Cleared 40 percent of the corridor to ready land for construction.



Before that work could begin, survey teams led by Jim Copeland and materials crews led by Lynelle Luther had to gather data to supply the design squads. Their accurate, fast work was instrumental in keeping the project moving.

And, no plan would matter without land on which to build it. The right of way team

We’ve around 1,700 days until anticipated completion. While our accomplishments are great, there are still many milestones left to meet. We thank you for the part you’ve played in the corridor and look forward to continuing to work together for a safer Route 67.

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# Safety Is 67 Goal

Whenever Route 67 is discussed, the themes of partnerships, growth and economic development inevitably follow. But one other major theme for the improvements is safety.

“Safety is what made this project happen,” says Planning Manager Bill Robison. “Data shows fatalities are reduced by half when a two-lane road is improved to a four-lane road.”

That information is exactly what makes Route 67 south of Poplar Bluff a priority as well.

“Upgrading the five-mile section south of Poplar Bluff is important to the community to improve safety,” Robison says. “It’s a priority project for the Ozark Foothill RPC as well as MoDOT’s Southeast District.”

The project became a priority statewide last fall. Planning partners from across the state met to prioritize the state’s needs, and this portion of 67 finished among the top.

“I think the partners from across the state could recognize the need, and now, we wait to secure funding so that these important safety improvements can get started,” says Robison.

# Commission Meets In Poplar Bluff



Commissioners Rudolph Farber & Duane Michie

For the first time, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission held its regular monthly meeting in Poplar Bluff last December.

During their stay they were treated to a banquet courtesy of the Poplar Bluff Chamber of Commerce, Highway 67 Corporation and City of Poplar Bluff.

MoDOT officials also toured Route 67 south of Poplar Bluff.

# President Signs Corps \$\$\$

While the Highway 67 Corporation was the impetus for much of the Route 67 Corridor project, it wasn’t the only partner. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also stepped forward to partner on the project.

The Corps offered \$28 million in funding for the \$180 million improvement plan. Good news came late last year as President Bush signed the omnibus bill allocating \$6 million to the Corps for Route 67.

“We’re working with the Corps now on an agreement for the flow of the money into the Route 67 projects,” says MoDOT Planning Manager Bill Robison.

The Corps says work will continue on the remainder of the funding.

“The St. Louis District Corps of Engineers continues to plan and request funding to support the construction of portions of U.S. Route 67 impacted by operations from Lake Wappapello,” says the Corps’ Lou DellOrco. “The district is currently working with MoDOT personnel on the development of a relocation contract. This contract will be the vehicle that the district transfers appropriated funds for 67 to MoDOT. Funds are appropriated through the Energy and Water Bill.”

# Greenville Gets Funds

The City of Greenville received nearly \$200,000 in federal enhancement money last year for the Old Greenville Recreation Trail. The trail will connect Greenville with the Old Greenville Campground and Historic Site on Wappapello Lake, following an abandoned United States Forest Service access road.

Federal enhancement funds designate 10 percent of a transportation agency’s surface transportation program budget for projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, historic sites, tourist and welcome-center facilities, landscaping, scenic beautification and other restoration projects.

Local entities apply for the funding, and a committee of planning partners work with MoDOT to select projects to fund. The local entities must match at least 20 percent of the cost of the project.

Eleven local projects totaling approximately \$2.18 million were selected last year in Southeast Missouri.

# Route 67 Starts To Take Shape



Above: Construction of new bridge at Widows Creek.

Right & Below: Clearing and grading continues for the additional lanes.



Work continues on three of five sections of the Route 67 corridor. On Sections A and B, Progressive Contractors started earthwork mid-to-late February.

“We anticipate most of the earthwork to be completed in 2008 and begin paving the entire project in 2009,” says Resident Engineer Steve Bubanovich.

Robertson Inc., of Poplar Bluff is continuing work on several box culverts and bridges over Widow’s Creek and Otter Creek.

On Section C, RLP, of Poplar Bluff is actively

clearing the project in anticipation of utility relocations in the near future. A portion of the structure demolition was completed earlier in the year by MKG Construction.

“Robertson Contractors Inc. is forming

the bridge deck of the new four-lane structure over Lake Wappapello, and we look forward to placing concrete on the riding surface later this spring,” says Bubanovich.

On improvements to the existing lanes in Wayne and Butler Counties, Bubanovich says a portion of the rehabilitation work has been completed in Wayne County and drivers can look for the contractor to begin working in both counties as the weather breaks.

